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During this year, seed companies in the country have purchased over 6.5 million catties of selected seeds. Over 85 percent of the selected summer wheat seed and 95 percent of the autumn wheat seed is pure, i.e., not mixed with nonselected seeds. However, in the beginning of the program, due to confusion and work pressure, seed companies often accepted seed which was not carefully selected. This damaged the prestige of the companies and discouraged some farmers from using selected seed. The worst example is the collection of 400,000 catties of wheat seed No. 75 from Henan which was found later to be infected with nematodes. Such mistakes could have been avoided if the National Seed Selection Conference had been functioning. It is hoped that the present system of improvement and large-scale distribution will help to erase the bad impression acquired by the companies.

The hsien agricultural experimental station is the center of the seed-selection program at present. In addition to guiding the selection and distribution of selected seeds, the station also tries to introduce new agricultural techniques to the farmers from day to day. Emulation and competitive production by the farmers is encouraged by each hsien. The ultimate aim of the seed-selection program is to teach the farmers to select, judge, and distribute their own seeds.

The first batch of selected seeds should be examined and raised by the hsien agricultural station. If the seed is to be produced for general distribution, model lots located at the general area where the seed will be distributed are used for the planting. Some of the seed chosen by the provincial agriculture experimental station is planted on special farms by the station before the remainder is distributed to the appropriate hsien station. These seed plots will be used in checking results and planting data.

Seed selection at the village level does not require that every village participate. Villages having similar soil conditions may designate only one to make the tests. However, half of the villages in a hsien must participate in the hsien seed-selection program to insure a representative cross section. During the wheat seed-selection movement last fall, over 60 percent of the farm units participated. Whether the selection is to be held once or twice a year depends primarily on the decision of the hsien, subject to the approval of the provincial government.

The farmers are encouraged to set up their own experimental farms to cultivate and produce selected seed continuously. In the past year, much experience has been gained in seed selection by individual farmers. It is the policy of the Ministry of Agriculture to promote that type of selection. The provincial experimental station should take into consideration the particular need of the province and the resources available in the field in determining the type of seed to be included in the selection program.

At present, the need in North China is to develop a rust-resistant wheat, while Central China needs an early-maturing and high-yielding wheat as well as a better quality of rice. In the soybean-producing area, greater production of the export type of soybean is necessary. The primary goals in seed selection at the present are high-yielding, disease-resisting, top-quality seeds. In carrying out the program, precaution must be taken to avoid spreading plant disease through the seeds. Cleaning all the selected seeds with salt solution and educating the farmers to avoid contamination are necessary precautions. Careful organization and supervision by the cadres is important to insure the success of the present seed-selection program.

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